

Prabuddha Bharata

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य पराश्रितो भवत ।

Katha Upan. I. iii. 6

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

PART II.—VII

[Place—*The Belur Math (in course of preparation)*. Year—*Beginning of 1899.*

Subjects—*How long is it necessary to observe the holiness of times and places?—Whatever destroys the hindrance to the manifestation of the Atman constitutes Sadhana (religious practice)—there is no touch of relation with action in the Knowledge of Brahman, interpretation of scriptural texts.—What is Nishkamakarma, work without any desire—Karma (work) does not directly bring about the perception of the Atman—then why did Swamiji urge the people of this country to work?—The future of India is assured.*]

Swamiji's health is now very much better. The rooms of the old house that was standing on the grounds newly purchased for the Math are being repaired and rendered fit for use, but are not yet completed. The whole grounds have been levelled up by filling it in with earth. To-day Swamiji is walking round the grounds in the afternoon in company with the disciple. He has a big stick in hand, dressed in a *gerrua* long-coat of flannel and his head is uncovered. Talking with the disciple, he is advancing with him in the southerly direction up to the gate and then walking back and in this way he is pacing

up and down from the house to the gate and back many times. The roots of the *Bilva* tree to the right has been built round with brick-work for a seat. Standing at a little distance off from the tree Swamiji took to singing slowly a Bengalee song: * "O Himalayas—Ganesh is auspicious to me. Placing the seat of invocation

* This is one of the many *agamani* (invocatory welcome) songs sung in the homes of Bengal during the Durgapuja days when Gauri, the consort of Shiva is believed to come down from her inaccessible retreats in the snow-capped peaks of Kailas and visit the haunts and habitation of men once a year and stay for three days. The words

under the shade of the *Bilva* tree, Gauri will grace the place for the good of Ganesh. In my house shall I welcome Gauri and hear many recitations of Her glory; hither also shall hie many *dandis* (Sannyasins) and Yogis with matted hair (to witness the joyous occasion)." While singing the song Swamiji addressing the disciple said, "Here shall hie many *dandis* (Sannyasins) and Yogis with matted hair—do you understand? In course of time many Sadhus and Sannyasins will come here" Saying this he sat under the *Bilva* tree and said, "It is a very holy place, under the *Bilva* tree. Meditating under the *Bilva* tree quickly brings about the awakening of our religious faculties—Sri Rama-krishna used to say so.

Disciple.— Sir, those who are given to *Vichara* (philosophical reasoning) on the discrimination and perception of the Atman everywhere,—have they any need to discriminate between holiness and otherwise of times and places.

Swamiji.— Those who are established in the knowledge of the Atman, they have no need for such discrimination, but that established character is not attained off hand? It comes as the result of many practices and spiritual endeavours. Therefore in the beginning one has to take help of external props and learn to establish a character and stand on one's legs. Later, when one is established in the knowledge of the Atman, there is no need for any props.

The many methods of spiritual practice as laid down in the Scriptures are all for

of the song are in the lips of Menaka the consort of King Himalaya, and mother of Gauri, joyously addressed to King Himalaya on the prospect of Gauri's visiting her father's home once in the year, coming down from Kailash.

the attainment of the knowledge of Atman. But all those practices are a form of work, and so long as there is any propulsion of work, the Atman is not discovered. The obstacles to the manifestation of the Atman are overcome by practices as laid down in the scriptures, but the works of spiritual practices have no power *directly* of uncovering the vision of the Atman; they are only effective in removing some covering veils to knowledge. Thereafter the light of the Atman manifests by its own effulgence. Do you see?—Therefore does your commentator (Sankara) aver—"In knowledge of Brahman, there is not any touch of relation with work."

Disciple.— But, Sir, when the obstacles to manifestation are not overcome without the performance of work in some form or other then indirectly and in effect, Karma (work) stands as the means to knowledge.

Swamiji.— From the standpoint of the causal chain, it so appears *prima facie*. Taking up this view it is stated in the Purva-Mimamsa that work for a definite end infallibly produces a definite result. But the vision of the Atman which is unqualified is not to be compassed by means of work. For, the rule with regard to a seeker of the Atman is to perform works of spiritual practice, but to have no eye on their results. It follows thence that these works of spiritual practice are only the cause of the purification of the aspirant's mind and of nothing else. For if the Atman could have been directly perceived as a *result* of the practices, then Scripture would not have enjoined on the Sadhaka (aspirant) the renunciation of the results of works. So in order to combat the efficacy of work producing results as put forward in the

Purva-Mimamsa, the efficacy of works without any desire for fruits as mentioned in the Gita have been brought in. Do you see?

Disciple.— But, Sir, if I have to renounce all hopes for the fruits of work, why shall I feel inclined to undertake works entailing pain of body and mind?

Swamiji.— In this human life, one cannot but do without doing some work or other always. When man has perforce by nature to do some work, therefore it is enjoined according to Karma-yoga to do such work as will bring freedom through the attainment of vision of the Atman. As to what you have said, "Why shall I get the motivation to perform such work"—the answer is, whatever work you do has some root of motivation behind it; when by the long performance of work, one notices that one work leads to another from birth to birth in an interminable round, then the awakened discrimination of man begins to question itself—where is the end to such incessant round of work? It is then that he appreciates the full import of the words of Lord in the Gita.—"The way of work is deep and inscrutable." When work with desire brings no lasting happiness, then the Sadhaka becomes a renouncer of action. But by the nature of embodied existence the performance of some work is a necessity, what work then will he take up? He takes up a few unselfish works for the good of all but he gives up desire for fruits. For he has then known, that in the results of work lie imbedded the seeds of future births and deaths. Therefore the knower of Brahman, is a renouncer of all actions—although to outward appearance he engages himself in some work—he has no selfish interest in it. Such are in the scriptures said to be Karma-yogins.

Disciple.— Is then aimless work of the knower of Brahman devoid of any desire for fruits like the mad endeavours of a lunatic?

Swamiji.— Why so? Renunciation of the fruits of work means the renunciation of work performed for the good of one's own body or mind. The knower of Brahman never seeks his own happiness. But what is there to prevent him from doing work for the welfare or real happiness of others? Whatever work he does without selfish attachment to its fruits bring only good to the world—those works are "for the good of many," "for the happiness of many." Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "They never take a false step"—Haven't you read in the Uttar-Charita? "Fruition follows in the wake of the words of the ancient Rishis"—that is to say, their words are always fruitful, they are never in vain or false. When the mind is merged in the Atman by the suppression of all selfish modification it produces "a dispassion for the enjoyment of fruits of works here or hereafter," i. e. there remains no desire in the mind for any enjoyment here or after death in any heavenly sphere. But in the state of coming out of Samadhi (or suppression of all modifications.) the mind descends into the world of I and Mine, the subject-object world; then by the force of previous work, habit or Samskaras (impressions) the functions of the body go on as before. The mind then generally is in the super-conscious state, eating and other functions of the body are done from mere necessity, the body-consciousness is very much reduced and attenuated then. Whatever work is performed after reaching this state of transcendental knowledge is done truly and is infallible; it conduces to the real well-being of men and the world; for

then the mind of the doer of such work is not contaminated by selfishness and by the calculation of personal loss or gain. The Lord has created this wonderful creation from the realm of super-consciousness; therefore there is nothing imperfect in this world. So I was saying the works of a knower of the Atman performed without attachment for fruits are never imperfect but conduce to real well-being of man and the world.

Disciple— Sir, you said just before that Jnana (knowledge) and Karma (work) are mutually contradictory. In the supreme knowledge there is no grain of room for work, or in other words, that by means of work the realisation of Brahman cannot be attained, why do you then speak words calculated to awaken great Rajas (activity). You were telling me the other day—"Work, work, work—there is no other way besides it."

Swamiji.— Going round the whole world, I find that people of this country are immersed in great Tamas (inactivity) compared with peoples of other countries. On the outside, there is a simulation of the Sattvic (calm and balanced) state beyond work, but inside, downright inertness like stocks and stones—what work will be done in the world by such people. How long can such an inactive, lazy people live in the world? First travel in Western countries, then contradict my words. How much of endeavour, devotion to work, how much enthusiasm and manifestation of activity are there in the lives of people in Western countries! While in your country it is as if the blood has become congealed in the heart, so that it cannot circulate strongly in the veins—as if paralysis has overtaken the body and it has become languid. So my idea is by increased activity to make them devoted to work and

capable for the struggle of life. With no strength in the body—no enthusiasm—what will they do—these lumps of dead matter. By stimulating them I want to bring life within them—to this I have staked my life. I shall rouse them by the infallible power of Vedic *Mantrams*. I am born for that, to make them listen to that fearless message—"Arise, awake." Be you my helpers in this work. Go over from village to village, country to country preach the message to all from the Brahman to the Chandala. Tell everybody that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal Bliss. Thus rouse up the Rajas within them—make them fit for the struggle of life, then speak to them about salvation hereafter. First make the people of the country stand on their legs by rousing their inner power, first let them learn to have food and clothes and enjoyment—then tell them about the means to freedom from all earthly bondage in salvation. Laziness, meanness and hypocrisy have covered the whole length and breadth of the country. Can the intelligent and the wise look on and be silent? Does it not bring tears to the eye? Madras, Bombay, Punjab, Bengal—whichever way I look I see no signs of life. You are thinking yourself very learned? What nonsense have you learnt? Getting by heart the thoughts of others in a different language, and stuffing your brain with them and taking some university diplomas, you consider yourself very learned. What is the goal of your education? Either a clerkship or a roughish lawyer, or at most a form of clerkship in the shape of a Deputy Magistracy—isn't that all? What good will it do you or the country at large? Open your eye and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, famous for

its wealth. Will your education fulfil the want? Never; with the help of western science set your hands to dig the earth and produce foodstuffs—not by means of mean servitude of others—but by your own exertions with the help of western science discovering new avenues to production. Therefore I teach the people of the country to be devoted to work to be able to produce food and clothes for their use. For want of food and clothes plunged in thoughts of poverty, the country is going to ruin—what are you doing to allay it? Throw aside your scriptures in the Ganges and teach them first the means of procuring their food and clothes and then read to them the scriptures. If their material wants are not removed by the rousing of intense activity, none will listen to words of religion. Therefore do I say, first rouse the inherent power of the Atman within you, rouse the faith of the

general people in that power as much as you can, first make provision for food, then teach them religion. There is no time to sit idle—who knows when death will overtake one?

Saying these words, an expression of mingled emotion of remorse, sorrow, compassion and power shone on his face. Looking at his divine appearance, the disciple was awed into silence. A few while afterwards Swamiji said again, "That devotion to work and self-reliance must come in the people of the country in time—I see it clearly. There is no escape. The intelligent can see the future picture of three *Yugas* ahead."

Since the advent of Sri Ramakrishna the Eastern sky has been lighted with the rays of the dawn; in course of time the whole country will be effulgent by its irradiation with the brilliance of the midday sun.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

IT was a period of racial crisis—the one preceding the advent of Gautama Buddha on the stage of Indian history. The Brahmanical ritual elaborated into intricate forms and ceremonies from the simple worship of Vedic times lay as a soul-deadening weight and ceased to express the life-mission of the race—the evolution of true spirituality—the goal of realisation in Indian humanity. The Gods of the Hindu Pantheon were also multiplied claiming unquestioning allegiance of men and whenever there is a multiplication of Gods in the Pantheon, there follows the usual sequence of priestly rule and the elaboration of cumbrous rituals and intricate forms which was lost

of all significance to its worshippers. The early Aryan community was very exclusive and surrounded by unscalable walls refused to admit the various Non-Aryan races which had gathered outside the pale of their civilisation. When the Aryan population thus lay bound at the feet of priestly rule and the Aryan civilisation was in danger of being swamped by the large numbers of Non-Aryan races, with different customs, worships, spiritual instinct and social ambitions it was then that the mighty genius of Gautama Buddha arose on the scene of Indian history.

Buddha preached the pure religion of the Upanishads and Vedanta. He swept away

the whole mass of killing rituals whose significance was lost and dethroned the Gods of the Pantheon and vindicated the divinity and supremacy of the destiny of man over all the Gods. Nirvana was the property and birthright of every being, even the gods themselves were in the course of attaining to it and was therefore relegated to a subordinate position to the Enlightened man. Such a vindication was necessary in order to rescue humanity from the deadweight of killing rituals and material forms of religion and also from the overweight of the rule of Personal Gods whose relation to man was not clearly perceived.

It was thus Advaitism which came to the rescue of the masses and saved India from materialism. The Nirvana of Buddha was nothing else than the negation of the individual ego of selfish desires, passions, lust and the attainment of *Brahmīsthiti* or Samadhi, rest or peace in Brahman or the Absolute. For all the implications of Buddha's Nirvana was the same as *Advaitism*, with its inalienable sovereignty and the divinity and solidarity of man.

But the great achievement of Buddhism was its social synthesis and amalgamation of diverse ethnic groups into a nation stamped with Aryan culture. By its universal appeal of spiritual equality and divinity of man and the right of everyone to the attainment of Nirvana by its wonderful sympathy and charity for everybody it was eminently successful in assimilating the diverse ethnic elements of the Indian population whom the exclusive Brahminical ritual have barred and welding them into one compact culture; the Nirvana of Buddha came as a salvation to the non-

Aryan elements; this process of Aryanisation, or the distribution of the culture of the Aryans to ethnic groups in different stages of civilisation and of bringing them up to the same cultural level has gone on through the whole course of subsequent Indian history and has come down to our times in an unfinished condition. But it was the work of Buddha which first made a cultural unity of the diverse elements, and although in its propagandist zeal it overreached itself and by compromises with the customs, and forms of worship brought into it by the various low races which flocked within its fold, it lost its individuality and became degraded, yet without the initial synthesis of ethnic groups into one cultural unity, no subsequent movement could have carried on its work of reconstruction.

Another ideal with which Buddhism refreshed the Aryan culture on which it built, was the gospel of service of man, its practical social morality. It is the first religion which brought positive social service and well-doing of man into being as an integral part of its religious conduct. Its doctrines cut away the basis of worship of Personal Gods. Nirvana, or the impersonal absolute state of peace is to be attained not by propitiating deities, for there is none higher than man, but by his own exertions, by the renunciation of selfishness in the service and worship of man, nay of all animate creation, for it comprised all mankind as parts of an universal whole, and all isolated self-seeking was an effective bar to the attainment of Nirvana. Its doctrine of Karma left man master of his destiny without the interference of any imaginary being, and our own action to be the sole determinant of our past, present and future. How

truly are these reminiscent of Advaitic teachings and of practical Vedanta ! Buddha it was who first brought Advaitism into practice in the social body of India, and how eminently successful he was and brought spiritual deliverance to the people and uplifted Indian humanity is testified to by history.

But there were one or two defects in the Buddhist movement which have hindered the life-growth of the Indian culture and for which we are still suffering. It was not due to the Master's teaching, but to subsequent historical circumstances when as a result of the various uncivilised and uncultured races, not understanding and following the sublime teachings made a hideous travesty of them reducing them to a state of utter degradation. Buddha's wholesale rejection of ritual and forms of religion and of a Personal God was too refined and high for these uncivilised races. For some time after Buddha's death it seemed as if they have been civilised and improved culturally, but that was not stable and was due only to the influence of his mighty personality. Subsequently their own savage nature asserted itself and in place of the Brahmanical rituals and Gods which Buddha took away from them, they brought out the most sensual rituals, the most hideous forms of worships, magic, ghosts, and the most degraded fetishes which their ancestors used to worship. Secondly Buddha in his zeal to be of the people and to reach the masses gave his teachings in the language of the people and did not spread the culture of Aryan learning, Sanskrit language, philosophy and in the whole Buddhistic movement, we look in vain for the intellectual brilliance at all comparable with the mother

religion. This want of culture, and intellectual brilliance could not secure any permanence in the raised condition of the unryanised elements and helped the more easily to the depths of its later degradation.

These defects were rectified in part by the later Vedic reactions led by Kumarilla and Sankara, who while on the one hand preaching the most sublime philosophical religion, and yet preached a popular form of Personal God with the judicious use of ritual, images, temples for people low in the scale of religious advancement. But the fulfilment of Buddha's work, the assimilation of the diverse ethnic elements of Indian population and bringing them up to the highest level of Aryan Vedic culture has been working during the whole course of subsequent history. Retarded as it has been by latter degradation of Buddhism, the work since the time of Sankara to the present has been the slow bringing back of the Indian masses to the highest level of Vedic religion and culture.

All the subsequent reforming movements had two objects in view, first to bring back the masses given to the most material and sensual forms of religion to refined religion of the Vedas, and secondly to assimilate them into a huge Aryan body. The movements of Ramanuja, Ramananda, Kabir, Dadu, Nanak all sought to compass this by first preaching a Personal God of love and by accepting the spiritual equality of man superseding caste-distinctions as emphasised by Buddhism. Levelling up of the castes and of bringing them up to the same high cultural level and so incorporating the masses into a compact people has been their persistent effort and this has come down even to the present generation. The

method of work of these religious reformers for doing away with caste-distinctions and unifying the people was to raise the religious level of the masses, and with the assimilation by them of the culture and spirituality of the high castes the caste-distinctions, the great gulf between higher and lower classes will be bridged and the problem of a unified nationality will be solved.

The latest Hindu revivalist movement following in the wake of the ancient Acharyas and religious reformers have sketched out a similar plan of campaign. It was Swami Vivekananda who said that before flooding of land with social and political ideas we must deluge the land with spiritual ideas. For by centuries of evolution it is spirituality which is the theme of Indian people and the only gateway to culture and it is through that door that we should seek to raise

the cultural level of the masses. Without the assimilation of the culture and spirituality by the masses, all preaching of social equality will be a repetition of the mistake of Buddhistic movement as when the diverse uncivilised races within the Aryan fold, imperfectly Aryanised, degraded the nation by their hideous forms and worship, customs and conceptions. The movement of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda has also set its face to the uplift of the masses by raising their spiritual level and has like Buddha of old emphasised the divinity and solidarity of man. Yet it has left the Personal God of worship according to the capacity of individual and also preached social service and practical morality from the Vedic standpoint as the worship of God in man. It has set itself the task of spreading the truths contained in our scriptures by scattering them broad-cast over the land, so that it may be the property of everyone, high and low.

THE HINDU CONCEPTION OF IMMORTALITY.

MANY Christian scholars of distinguished ability have been devoting their lives to an impartial study and understanding of Indo-Aryan thought, and especially to the thought of the Vedanta. In spite of their sympathetic intentions they have made sweeping statements that are wholly misleading. As an example we may point to that colossal misunderstanding among Western thinkers, who almost without exception identify the Vedanta conception of the Absolute with that of pantheism. Schopenhauer was the first to make this mistake; it is hard to say who will be the last. Scholars of no less rank than James, Caird, Royce, and Howi-

son have again and again identified Vedantism with pantheism or put upon it the stamp of a monism which is foreign to it.*

So also the Vedantic conception of immortality like the Vedantic Absolute, is neither pantheistic nor personal. Many a scholar, following the trend of Buddhistic thought, has stated positively that the Vedanta teaches self-annihilation. The truth is, however, that the Vedanta

* See Caird, "The Evolution of Religion," I, p. 262; Howison, "The Limits of Evolution," pp. 252-4; James, "Pragmatism," p. 151; Royce, "The World and the Individual," First Series, Lectures IV & V.

teaches neither the Christian doctrine of personal immortality nor the doctrine of impersonal immortality of Buddhism; but it stands for a super-personal immortality that challenges equally the self-affirmation of Christianity and Zoroastrianism, and the self-annihilation of Buddhism. To show how the Vedanta supports its position will be the task of this paper.

Though immortality has often been doubted as a fact, as an ideal it has a force and an appeal impossible to ignore. James, who refused credence to any accepted ideas, when questioned regarding his belief in immortality, replied, "The more I live, the fitter I find myself for living." Then he added that for personal immortality he felt never keenly but much more strongly as he grew old. On the other hand, for Royce immortality is as much a fact as the sunrise and the sunset. For him immortality is both an ethical and an epistemological fulfilment, and without it life is of no value. Thus for James immortality is an emotional necessity, for Royce a logical necessity. But these necessities, logical or emotional, are not the fruit of modern philosophical discussion, but are deeply rooted in many of the ancient systems of thought. Christianity and Zoroastrianism both looked upon immortality as an emotional necessity; for Hinduism, or the Vedanta, it is an epistemological necessity. This we shall see more clearly in a comparison of Hinduism with Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Christianity.

Zoroastrianism, one of the oldest of Aryan religions, takes an anthropomorphic view of the world. In this religion the only path to salvation is purity. Salvation, according to Zoroaster, is given by Ohrmuzd, or God, who is the totality of purity, goodness, and beneficence. Against

Him works the Evil One, Ihrman, who corresponds to the Satan of the Bible. In this life there is a constant struggle between Ohrmuzd and Ihrman over the destiny of the human soul. Ohrmuzd, the principle of goodness and purity, like a final cause, "beacons the soul" to Paradise, while the Evil One endeavours to lead it astray. The reward of following the good principle is the felicity of Heaven. "Be pure in word, action, and thought, and you will be rewarded by Ohrmuzd with the felicity of Paradise," says Zoroaster.

In this element of anthropomorphism Zoroastrianism shows many resemblances to the great Hebrew religion, Christianity. Like the Persian religion Christianity promises rewards hereafter for a life of religion here. The Christian seeks a fulfilment of his ethical nature. He attains it by the realisation of his spiritual self through faith and action. His spiritual self is one of a community of souls ruled by the supremely perfect being, God; and the spiritual order is referred to as another world, where dwell perfected souls brought into harmony by the Highest Perfection. Thus, according to Christianity, immortality is personal rather than impersonal; life after death is a reward for service performed here. The text reads:

"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality, is given eternal life."

"Tribulations and anguish upon every soul that doeth evil either to a Jew or a Gentile."

"For this corruptible must put on the incorruptible and this mortal the immortal. And this I say, Brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

"So when this corruptible shall have

put on the incorruptible and this mortal the immortal, then shall the Kingdom commence. Death shall be swallowed up in victory."

"Now unto the Kingdom Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever. Amen." (Corinthians and Timothy.)

In these passages the salient point is that a Christian is to gather "treasures" in the next world. It is the world to come for which he lives; and this world to come is to be gained through the destruction of all that is earthly and corruptible. To put it briefly, fulfilment is the reward of renunciation. The doctrine of renunciation is not, however, peculiar to Christianity. As we shall see presently, the gospel of Buddha is saturated with the idea of "getting by giving."

Meanwhile, let me note that, as against both Christianity and Zoroastrianism, the Vedanta denies, in the first place, that evil is either a personality or a principle; and further it denies that the doing of good in this world brings any important return either in this world, or the world to come. Good conduct of itself does not necessarily lead to liberation. And in general we may say that, while the Christian and Zoroastrian conceptions of immortality are based upon practical and emotional necessities, the Hindu conception of immortality represents an intellectual or epistemological necessity.

The same is true to some extent of Buddhism. Like Christianity, Buddhism, as we have seen, emphasises the idea of renunciation. But there is a cardinal point of difference. Where Christianity places its emphasis upon faith as the pathway of salvation, Buddhism emphasises thought. "All that we are," says Buddha,

"is the result of our thoughts and is founded upon our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with all evil thought, evil will follow him.....He who returns hatred for hatred is in error. For hatred is never appeased by hatred, but by love." This introduces us to a freer atmosphere and a more gracious life—more gracious in the sense that it avoids the crudities of "faith" and leaves our freedom unimpaired by the dogmatic assertion of an Evil One, such as *Ihrman*. Yet the question remains whether, in the matter of immortality, Buddhism is a gain over Christianity. To the Buddhist, immortality involves the annihilation of false individual self. With the Christian he holds that this world is a prison house. "Birth is sorrowful, growth is sorrowful, death is sorrowful." Under these circumstances it behoves us to find a way out of this "sorry trade" of life, which is bound up with pain and pleasure; for "every sensation begets pain or happiness." Preceding each sensation, however, is a mental state which causes action which in turn causes sensation. That is to say, at the beginning of each causal chain the Buddhist finds thought. But all thought is purposive, a search for fulfilment. And every fulfilment in the end begets pain and pleasure. How, then, shall we transcend pain and pleasure? The answer is, by thwarting the purpose of thought. According to Buddhism, by the annihilation of purpose one attains to the infinite impersonality, *Nirvana*. The centre and source of purposes is individuality; perfection demands the complete destruction of individuality, and the bliss of *Nirvana* is the reward for doing that.

Evidently, however, to thwart a purpose is to have a purpose. In the last analysis, then, Buddhism is self-contradictory. Such a criticism would hold both from the

point of view of the Vedanta and from that of Aristotelian logic.

Such are the conceptions of immortality which are to be contrasted with that of the Vedanta. Christianity and Zoroastrianism are both anthropomorphic. But while Zoroastrianism stands for an almost physical immortality, Christianity advocates self-renunciation here in return for a spiritual self-regaining hereafter. Buddhism, again stands for spiritual fulfilment, but while Christianity treats spiritual fulfilment as personal, for Buddhism it is impersonal. The Christian desires to live the perfect life of God beside God; the Buddhist denies that God is a person and desires to live *in* Him; His perfect impersonal life. For the Christian, the God is good; for the Buddhist, He is above both good and evil. The Christian seeks the triumph of good; the Buddhist, the triumph of Nirvana. Furthermore, while the Christian seeks immortality through faith; the Buddhist seeks it through knowledge. Here Buddhism is at one with Vedantism; and doubtless it is upon this ground that the Vedanta is falsely called pantheistic.

The Vedanta has many points in common with Western philosophy and may be instructively compared with Kant on the one hand and with the more recent forms of idealism on the other. For Kant, we remember, immortality is an ethical necessity. According to the Vedanta, the world of knowledge and the world of life are the one and the same. And here the Vedanta agrees better with the later forms of idealism, such as that of Royce, who holds that immortality is both an ethical and an epistemological (logical) necessity. According to Royce, the world-principle is teleological, and the conscious realisation of purpose transcends the world of finite

space and time. Each purpose realised reveals a greater purpose, and thus we go, step by step, from the least perfect state to the state of final perfection in the Absolute. According to Royce, we are to live *with* God His perfect life. Here, however, the Vedanta asserts that we are to live *in* God His perfect life; and where Royce conceives the life of God as an eternal present in an infinity of time; for the Vedanta, it is timeless. In the Vedanta time and space are both Maya. What is Maya? Is Maya real?

Maya, a word most unfortunately misunderstood, does not mean illusion. It means simply relation (spatial and temporal). Maya is what holds down and keeps in relation. It is real so far, but will cease to be real as we outgrow it. For illustration, imagine a beautiful woman and a wealthy man drawn together by the wealth of one and the beauty of the other, and that later the relation becomes one of personal love. The period that precedes the true love is then for each an illusion. But though beauty and wealth have now been transcended by love, they were at one time both real. Only from the present standpoint are they illusory.

So exactly is Maya. It is real as long as we are in it. It is illusory when we have transcended it. And Brahman is above Maya because It is timeless.

Vedantic immortality is first of all a spiritual immortality. And thus it is opposed to such materialistic conceptions of immortality as those of certain ancient thinkers who held that the desire for immortality was satisfied by the continuance of the life of the father in the son, or by the indestructibility of the chemical substances of which our bodies are composed. Those who think that the immortality of the father should be sought for in this

world in the son are refuted by the fact that the whole problem of immortality is a question raised by our self-consciousness. It is not the identity of the body that we are concerned to maintain, but the identity of the personal self. And it is this consideration that renders immortality a problem; for we know when death comes what will happen to our bodies. Immortality is a conscious necessity, a necessity created by the consciousness of personal identity over against the chaotic multiplicity of elements in the physical organism. Material immortality would be only, as Sadakichi Hartman says, "The repetition of the same chaos."

To a Hindu, immortality is not a probability but an actuality; and this sense of actuality is found time and again even in the oldest scriptures. The Rig Veda says: "Make me immortal in that realm where they move and rest, in the sphere of heaven where lucid worlds are full of light. Make me immortal in that realm where happiness and transport, joy and peace, combine, and all longings are fulfilled."† Many similar passages may be found in the later texts. What, then is the way that leads to the realm "where beings move, yet rest"? To this question a later book, the Bhagavad Gita replies: "I have already mentioned that in this world there is a two-fold path (1) of knowledge and (2) of action. No man attains salvation by giving up action; for that is ignorance. Freedom is through action and knowledge. He who restrains his senses and uses them by his mind is the truer man." In another place the same text says: "One must be satisfied with his own earning and rise above the

world of opposites (pleasure and pain) and attain to perfection." "Action doth not fetter him who hath true knowledge." "Renunciation and pursuit of action are both necessary for contentment." "Let the knowledge be of the ego. There is none greater than the ego." "When man's nature has become purified by the breath of knowledge, then he sees the One, meditates on Him and becomes one with Him." ‡

These quotations show that to the Hindu immortality is an epistemological fulfilment. Knowledge, however, is not a "succession of conscious states," but a continuity of knowing process. Mind is neither a "tabula rasa" nor an independent real. According to the Vedantic logic, the mind uses "Pratyaksha" (sense data) obtained through the senses to make its own Pramana (inferences). In other words, the mind merely uses the sense for the development of its own knowledge. True knowledge is the knowledge of inferences.

This knowing is at the same time a striving. "Actions do not fetter him who hath true knowledge." "Fettering" here means a hindering from becoming or knowing. The goal of all knowing is God, who is the absolute knower. "To know the Brahman is to be the Brahman." Knowledge does not stop short of the Brahman. And Knowledge of Brahman is an assimilation, or identity of being, with Brahman—in other words, knowing Brahman is being Brahman.

What is the relation of Vedantic epistemology to Vedantic ethics? In the complex field of Hindu ethics we may distinguish three schools and three theories of the relation of good and evil. One school holds that good and evil are rele-

† The Rig Veda was written (compiled) not later than 1000 B. C.

‡ Muller's translation.

vant only to this world of Maya,—the world of phenomena in space and time,—and that God, who is above time and space, is also beyond good and evil. The second (dualistic) school holds that good and evil are laws of the ethical world, like the laws of action and reaction in the physical world. Both of these schools are more or less hedonistic and contain the usual self-contradiction of hedonism inasmuch as the two categories of good and evil are neither logically related nor logically transcended.

The third school, the school of the Vedanta, has little in common with the other two. Space will not permit of more than a summary of its doctrines. "Evil exists in false knowledge." "Good is that which enhances true knowledge." § These are purely epistemological definitions of good and evil, and they differ from the conceptions of good and evil held by Christianity, by Zoroastrianism, by Kant, and by Post-Kantian idealism. According to the Vedanta, becoming is a matter of knowing. Knowing implies a purpose. True knowledge is that "which fulfils a conscious purpose." But the ultimate purpose is the Brahman. "He who knoweth the Brahman is one with Him." And He is "Existence—absolute—knowledge—bliss." ¶ Or, as the Veda says, "He moveth as he repositeth." Aristotle seems to mean the same when he speaks of the "energy of repose."

Next to Maya, nothing in the Vedanta is more often misconstrued than its conception of individuality. For the mystic, individuality is an illusion, but not so to the Vedanta. "Nothing is greater than the self," says the Bhagavad Gita. The

very epistemological basis of the Vedantic philosophy implies a knowing self or individuality. And among the knowing individualities the Brahman is supreme. Every individual retains his identity until and unless he knows the Brahman. Brahman is the all-knower. He is the highest perfection, qualitative, quantitative, and quintessential. When an individual reaches that perfection of knowledge where he knows the Brahman, he becomes one with Him.

The idea of conscious individuality always brings to one's mind the image of the physical individual; and this raises the question of the Vedantic conception of matter. Regarding the relation of mind and body (material body) the Gita says "the bodies are only to embody or to give form to the (conscious) self." This is a necessary condition of knowledge, since knowledge begins with the senses and the senses cannot apprehend the formless.

One may ask, then, how consciousness is *defined* in contra-distinction to matter. "The opponent" (the materialist), says Sankara, "must further be asked how he imagines consciousness if he assumes its origin from the elements (matter). If he says that a consciousness is the perception of the elements and their product, then we know that consciousness has the latter for its objects, and consequently they cannot produce consciousness. The elements and their shape are objects of consciousness. How could they create consciousness? As the existence of the elements (and their forms) is concluded from the fact that they are perceived, so the conclusion must also be drawn that this perception is different from them (since perception makes the world known). The proper nature of perception is in the soul. Thus both the independence of the soul

§ Brahma Sutras, 472, 14. Deussen's translation.

¶ Sachchidananda.

as regards matter and the eternity of the soul follow from the unity of its perceptions: the percipient is the soul."* This quotation makes many points clear. To be, it maintains, is to be perceived. The immediate is not the object but the idea. Again, the soul, or conscious person, is immortal, and his life is independent of matter and motion. He is (potentially) beyond Maya, and his transcendence and knowledge have to be developed through Maya. Finally, as he reaches the goal of his knowing in Brahman he gains individuality instead of losing it—namely, the infinite individuality of the Brahman.

This is what we have called the superpersonal immortality of the Vedanta as against the Christian conception of immortality. In the Christian's Divine Community live perfected souls harmonised by the Supreme Perfection, God. According to the Vedanta, it is logically

impossible that individual perfected souls should live outside of the totality of perfection, or God. How can there be two perfections, individual and an universal perfection, outside of one another? Two things are two because they differ. There cannot be two perfections without qualifying the meaning of "perfection." Nor can a plurality of perfections exist without conditioning one another. The totality of perfection thus ceases to be perfection when He is obliged to condition and be conditioned by another. What the Vedanta teaches is that the finite individual takes the personality of the Supreme Individual, or God, and becomes personally identical with Him. "He is One and not two." (Ēkamabadvitīyam). That is the only true and logical conception of immortality.

DHAN GOPAL MUKHERJI.

* Brahma Sutras pp. 955-957 by Deussen.

N. B. This paper was read to the Philosophical Club of Leland Stanford University.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

CL.

C/o E. T. Sturdy Esq.,
Reading, Caversham,
England.
1895.

Dear —,

Glad to receive your letters. There are two defects in the letters which you all write, specially in yours. The first is that very few of the important points I ask are answered. Secondly there is unusual delay in replying. * * I have to work day and night, and am always whirling from place to place besides. * * These are countries where the people are most luxurious, fashionable folk, and no-

body would touch a man who has but a speck of dirt on his body. * * I hoped that somebody would come while I was still here, but as yet nothing has been settled I see. * * Business is business, that is, you must do everything promptly, delay and shuffling won't do. By the end of next week I shall go to America, so there is no chance of my meeting him who is coming. * * These are countries of gigantic scholars. Is it a fun to make disciples of such people? You are but children and talk like children. Only this much is needed that there should be someone to teach a little Sanskrit, or translate a bit in my absence, that's all. Why not

let G— visit these lands? It is a good idea. It will cost him but 3000 rupees to visit England and America, and go back. The more people come to these countries, the better. But then it tingles my nerves to look at those who don hats and pose as *Sahibs*!

Black as chimney sweeps, and calling themselves Europeans! Why not wear one's country-dress, as befits gentlemen?—Instead of that, to add to that frightfulness of appearance! Good heavens! * * Here, as in our country, one has to spend from his own pocket to give lectures, but one can make good the expenses if he lives long enough and makes a reputation. Another thing, my incessant lecturing tours are making my constitution very nervous, causing insomnia and other troubles. Over and above that, I have to work single-handed. It is no use depending on my countrymen. No one (in Bengal) has hitherto helped me with a penny, nor has a single soul stepped forward to my assistance. Everybody in this world seeks help, and the more you help him, the more he wants. And if you can do no further, he will call you a cheat. * * I love — and trust him. * * He will be free from disease through the Lord's grace. I take all his responsibility. * *

Yours affectionately
Vivekananda.

—
CLI.

C/o E. T. Sturdy Esq.,
High View, Caversham,
Reading England,
1895.

* * I am in receipt of —'s letter to-day. I am sorry to hear that — has suffered from gravel. Most probably it was due to indigestion. —'s debts have been cleared, now ask him to join the monastic order. The worldly wise instinct is most difficult to root out. * * Let him come and work in the Math. One is apt to imbibe a lot of mischievous ideas by concerning oneself too

long in worldly affairs. If he refuses to take the monastic vow, please tell him to clear out. I don't want amphibious types of men who will be half monks and half householders.

* * — has coined a *Lord* Ramakrishna Paramahansa, I see. What does he mean? English Lord, or Duke? Tell R—, let people say whatever they will,—“Men (who wrongly criticise) are to be treated as worms!” as Sri Ramakrishna used to say. Let there be no disparity between what you profess and what you do, also eschew the very name of Jesuitism. Was I ever an orthodox, Pauranika Hindu, an adherent of social usages? I do not pose as one. You will not have to say things that will be *pleasant* to any section of people. You must not so much as notice what the — say for or against us * * They could not do a penny-worth of service to him whose birth has sanctified their country where the primary laws of health and sanitation are trampled, and yet they would talk big! What matters it, my brother, that such men have got to say! * * It is for you to go on doing your own work. Why look up to men for approbation, look up to God! I hope S— will be able to teach them the Gita and the Upanishads and their commentaries somehow, with the help of the Dictionary?—Or, is it an empty Vairagya that you have? The days of such Vairagya are gone! It is not for everyone, my boy, to become Ramakrishna Paramahansa! I hope S— has started by this time. Please send a copy of the Panchadasi, a copy of the Gita (with as many commentaries as possible), a copy each of the Narada and Sandilya Suttras (published from Benares), a translation (good not worthless) of the Panchadasi, if it is available, translation by Kalibar Vedantavagish of Sankara's commentary. And if there be any translation Bengali, or English (by Srish Basu of Allahabad), of Panini's Suttras, or the Kásiká Vrithi, or the Phani Bhāshya, please send a copy of each. * * Now, just tell your

—s to send me a copy of the Vachaspathya Dictionary, and that will be a good test for those tall-talking people. In England religious movements make very slow progress. These people here are either bigots or atheists. And the former again have only a bit of formal religion. They say 'Patriotism is our religion.' That is all.

Send the books to America, c/o Miss Mary Philips, 19, W. 38th Street, New York, U. S. America. That is my American address. By the end of November I shall go to America. So send my books etc. there. If S— has started immediately on your receipt of my letter, then only I may meet him, otherwise not. Business is business, no child's play. Mr. S— will see him in and accommodate him. This time I have come to England just to probe a little. Next summer I shall try to make some stir. The winter after that, I shall go to India. * * Correspond regularly with those who are interested in us, so as to keep up their interest. Try to open centres in places all over Bengal. * * This much for the present. In my next I shall give you more details. Mr. S— is a very nice gentleman, a staunch Vedantist, and understands a smattering of Sanskrit. It is

with a good deal of labour that you can do a little bit of work in these countries; a sheer uphill task, with cold and rain into the bargain. Moreover, here you must support yourself and do your labour of love. Englishmen won't spend a penny on lectures or things of that sort. If they do come to listen to you, well, thank your stars.—as is the case in our country. Besides the common people here do not even know of me now. In addition to all this, they will give you a wide berth if you preach God and such like things to them. They think this must be another clergyman! Well, you just patiently do one thing,—set about collecting every thing that books beginning with the Rigveda down to the most insignificant of Puranas and Tantras, have got to say about creation and annihilation of the universe, about race, heaven and hell, the soul, consciousness and intellect etc., the sense-organs, Mukti, transmigration and such like things. No child's play would do, I want real scholarly work. The most important thing is to collect the materials. My love to you all.

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

WITH THE SWAMIS IN AMERICA.

VIII.

A YEAR or so, after the Swami Turiyananda had left America, the Swami Trigunatita came from India to carry on the Vedanta propaganda in California. He was the last of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna that have come to America so far. The Swamis that have come after him are the disciples of the Swami Vivekananda.

Cheerful, loving, strong in carrying out his own ideas, with an abundance of energy, Swami Trigunatita at once set to work to create an atmosphere of his own. He was strongly in favour of organisation and it is through his energetic efforts

that San Francisco to-day is in the possession of what the Swami called the first Hindu Temple in the West. The name is rather misleading to Hindu readers, for there is little in the building to suggest an Indian Temple. But it is a strong centre of the Vedanta work in California. The Swami was exceedingly active and this quality combined with his loving and cheerful nature, drew the admiration of some men and women who became his staunch disciples.

Though the Swami's main effort was concentrated on the San Francisco work, he sometimes came to the Shanti Ashrama with some of his

students and he has added considerably to the improvement of the place. He also visited Los Angeles on more than one occasion and his field of action was extended even to the state of Oregon.

The Swami was later assisted in his work by the Swami Prakashananda, who after the demise of his senior was placed in full charge of the work. He is in San Francisco to this day. About other Swamis I cannot write as I have not lived with them in America to see their work there.

I may mention however that Swami Nirmalananda came to New York and laboured there and in other cities for some time; that Swami Bodhananda is at present in charge of the New York Vedanta Society; that Swami Paramananda assisted by Sister Devamata has now for years been working in Boston and other places; and that the Swami Abhedananda is still active, preaching Vedanta, with a beautiful Ashrama in Connecticut as his headquarters.

What Vedanta has really done for us in the West is not always clearly understood in India. Of course, every one knows that it has been a great factor in liberating the Western mind from religious bondage and to clear the atmosphere of superstitions. This however Science had also done. Science had played havoc with most of the church doctrines and superstitions. But the work of Science was entirely of negative nature. In a religious sense it was destructive. It broke down but did not erect. It left the West stranded as far as religion is concerned. Church doctrines were no longer tolerable because they were simply not true. The doctrine of an anthropomorphic deity creating the universe out of nihil and then ever after consigning by far the greater part of his created creatures to eternal hell-fire is preposterous.

Except, of course, with her devotees, religion got a bad name in the West. The word religion became a stigma. And the West was divided into two parties,—the believers who accepted the Bible as a whole, who did not question, did not dare to question and the liberals who just as wholeheartedly rejected the Scriptures as a mass of nonsense. There was no middle way, not a single point of conciliation or of sympathy. The two parties kept aloof and heartily despised each other. This is putting it strong perhaps, but it was the

state of affairs in Europe as I know it thirty years ago.

Children of orthodox parents were nicknamed and giped by the boys of liberal parents. Many of these children naturally felt ashamed of the religion of their parents and they began to hate the very name of religion. And so the West became more and more atheistic and materialistic.

Then came Theosophy, Christian Science and New Thought,—all trying to bridge the gulf between belief and unbelief. But the scientific mind was not satisfied,—new superstitions replacing old superstitions, was the verdict. And then at last came the Swami Vivekananda with pure Vedanta. The liberals could accept or reject, but they could no longer sneer. Scientists could demand further proof, but they could not condemn. Those who were religiously inclined, but could not follow the church, found a new opening. Here was religion, philosophy and science combined. Heart and intellect could both be satisfied. There was no necessity of tearing from old traditions altogether. One could remain true to the old faith, but that old faith was re-interpreted and cleansed of its later growths. Those who wished to do so, could go back to Jesus and the Bible, for now they understood. There was doubting, vacillating, hesitation; but approaches were made. It was worth while investigating. In short, it was a reconciliation, a middle way. The liberals were silenced, the orthodox party found it wise to keep hands off. But there was an opening for both. And the success which the Swamiji met with in the West and later his successors shows that many adherents to both parties availed themselves of this novel opportunity of listening to men who carried a message of hope and security, a message that outraged neither religion, philosophy or science, a message that embraced all that was best in the culture of the West. Vedanta was the leaven that leavened the thought-world in the West. In how far this leavening process will continue to assert its influence the future alone can tell. But that there is already a tremendous change in thought in all strata of Western society, orthodox or liberal, no one can deny. Whether the Swami Vivekananda and his successors will get the credit for it, is not the question. It does not matter. The fact remains; and I dare say, that is all they care for.

So far, as regards the influence of Vedanta on the West as a whole. But there is another side to the question, a phase of not less importance. And that is the influence of Vedanta on individuals. Sri Ramakrishna said, and the Swami Vivekananda said it after him: "I am willing to be born a thousand times if thereby I can be of help to even a single soul." If these were not vain words—and we know they were not—then this question of the individual takes an important place in their life's work. And those who have watched closely the work of the Swamis in America and elsewhere, can testify to the fact that many lives have been changed through the self-sacrificing efforts of the Swamis. And this is after all the crowning success of a religious teacher. The glory of Jesus rests not in the fact that the Western world calls herself Christian to day, but in the fact that he made a few true, devoted disciples and that through his teaching through the ages that have since passed by, now and then, a single soul has found salvation. Religion in the highest sense, as the medium to liberate mankind from world-bondage, is always for

the few. And if in the ages to come now and then in the West a single soul attains Mukti or liberation through the teaching of Vedanta, the work initiated and carried on by the Swamis, meets with the success that they hope for. Says Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita: "Among thousands of men perchance one or two seek for perfection among thousands who seek for perfection perchance one or two attain to my divine state." And Jesus: "What man, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he finds it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. * * * I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, which need no repentance. * * * Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones shall perish."

A BRAHMACHARIN.

Concluded.

VIVEKACHUDAMANI

(Continued from page 113.)

यत्र भ्रान्त्या कल्पितं तद्विवेके
तत्तन्मात्रं नैव तस्माद्विभिन्नम् ।

स्वप्ने नष्टं स्वप्नविश्वं विचित्रं

स्वस्माद्विभक्तं किन्तु दृष्टं प्रबोधे ॥२५३॥

253. (What is) erroneously supposed to exist in something, is when the truth about it has been known, nothing but that substratum, and not at all different from it: The diversified dream universe (appears and) passes away in the dream itself. Does it appear on waking as something distinct from one's own self?

जातिनीतिकुलगोत्रदूरगं

नामरूपगुणदोषवर्जितम् ।

देसकालविषयातिवर्त्ति य-

द्ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥२५४॥

254. That which is beyond caste and creed, family and lineage; devoid of name and form, merit and demerit; transcending space, time and sense-objects;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

यत्परं सकलवागगोचरं

गोचरं विमलबोधचक्षुषः ।

शुद्धचिद्ब्रह्मनमनादि वस्तु य-

द्ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥२५५॥

255. That Supreme Brahman which is beyond the range of all speech, but accessible to the eye of pure illumination; which is pure, the Embodiment of Knowledge, the beginningless entity;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

षड्भिरूर्मिभिरयोगि योगिह-

द्वावितं न करणैर्विभावितम् ।

बुद्ध्यवेद्यमनवद्यमस्ति य-

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २५६ ॥

256. That which is untouched by the six-fold wave; meditated upon by the Yogi's heart, but not grasped by the sense organs; which the Buddhi cannot know; and which is unimpeachable;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[*Sixfold wave*—viz. decay and death, hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, which overtake the body and mind.]

भ्रान्तिकल्पितजगत्कलाश्रयं

स्वाश्रयं च सदसद्विलक्षणम् ।

निष्कलं निरुपमानवद्धि य-

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २५७ ॥

257. That which is the substratum of the universe with its various subdivisions, which are all creations of delusion; which Itself has no other support; which is distinct from the gross and subtle; which has no parts; and has verily no exemplar;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

जन्मवृद्धिपरिणत्यपक्षय-

व्याधिनाशनविहीनमव्ययम् ।

विश्वसृष्ट्यवविधातकारणं

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २५८ ॥

258. That which is free from birth, growth, development, waste, disease and death; which is indestructible; which is the cause of the projection, maintenance and dissolution of the universe;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

अस्तभेदमनपास्तलक्षणं

निस्तरङ्गजलराशिनिश्चलम् ।

नित्यमुक्तमविभक्तमूर्ति य-

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २५९ ॥

259. That which is free from differentiation; whose essence is never non-existent; which is unmoved like the ocean without waves; the ever-free; of indivisible Form;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

एकमेव सदनेककारणं

कारणान्तरनिरास्यकारणम् ।

कार्यकारणविलक्षणं स्वयं

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २६० ॥

260. That which, though One only, is the cause of the many; which refutes all other causes; which is Itself without cause; distinct from Maya and its effect, the universe; and independent;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

निर्विकल्पकमनल्पमक्षरं

यत्क्षराक्षरविलक्षणं परम् ।

नित्यमव्ययसुखं निरञ्जनं

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २६१ ॥

261. That which is free from duality; which is infinite and indestructible; distinct from the universe and Maya,—supreme, eternal; which is undying Bliss; taintless;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

यद्विभाति सदनेकधा भ्रमा-

नामरूपगुणविक्रियात्मना ।

हेमवत्स्वयमविक्रियं सदा

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥ २६२ ॥

262. That Reality which (though One) appears variously owing to delusion,—taking on names and forms, attributes and changes, Itself always unchanged, like gold in its modifications,—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

यच्चकास्त्यनपरं परात्परं

प्रत्यगेकरसमात्मलक्षणम् ।

भव्यचिन्मयमनस्तमव्ययं

ब्रह्म तत्त्वमसि भावयात्मनि ॥२६३॥

263. That beyond which there is nothing; which shines above Maya even, which again is superior to its effects, the universe; the inmost-Self of all, free from differentiation; the Real Self; the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; Infinite and immutable;—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

उक्तमर्थमिममात्मनि स्वयं

भावयेत्प्रणितयुक्तिभिर्धिया ।

संशयादिरहितं कराम्बुवत्

तेन तत्त्वनिगमो भविष्यति ॥२६४॥

264. On the Truth inculcated above, one must oneself meditate in one's mind, by means of the recognised arguments. By that means one will realise the Truth free from doubt etc., like water in the palm of one's hand.

[*Inculcated above*—In the ten preceding Slokas.

Recognised arguments—that are in harmony with the Vedas.]

सम्बोधमात्रं परिशुद्धतत्त्वं

विज्ञाय सङ्घे नृपवच्च सैन्ये ।

तदाधयः स्वात्मनि सर्वदा स्थितो

विलापय ब्रह्मणि विश्वजातम् ॥२६५॥

265. Realising in this body the Knowledge Absolute free from Nescience and its effects, like the king in an army, and being ever established in thy own Self, by resting on that Knowledge, merge the universe in the Brahman.

षुद्धौ गुहायां सदसद्विलक्षणं

ब्रह्मास्ति सत्यं परमद्वितीयम् ।

तदात्मना योऽत्र वसेद्गुहायां

पुनर्न तस्याङ्ग गुहाप्रवेशः ॥२६६॥

266. In the recesses of the Buddhi there is the Brahman, distinct from the gross and subtle, the Existence Absolute, Su-

preme, the One without a second. He who lives in this cave as Brahman, for him, O beloved, there is no more entrance into the mother's womb.

[*Cave*—The Buddhi is often spoken of thus, *He who lives etc.*—He who always thinks of himself as Brahman has no more rebirth.]

ज्ञाते वस्तुन्यपि बलवती वासना नादिरपा

कर्ता भोक्ताप्यहमिति दृढा यास्य संसारहेतुः ।

प्रत्यग्दृष्ट्याऽऽत्मनि निवसता सापनेया प्रयत्ना-

न्मुक्तिं प्रादुस्तदिह मुनयो वासनातानवं यत् ॥२६७॥

267. Even after the Truth has been realised, there remains that strong beginningless, obstinate impression that one is the agent and experiencer, which is the cause of one's transmigration. That impression has to be carefully removed by living in the Brahman with a constant identification with the Supreme Self. The sages call that liberation which is the attenuation of Vāsanās or impressions here and now.

[*Attenuation etc.*—Because the man who has no selfish desires easily attains Mukti.]

अहं ममेति यो भावो देहाच्चादावनात्मनि ।

अध्यासोऽयं निरस्तव्यो विदुषा स्वात्मनिष्ठया २६८

268. The idea of 'me and mine' in the body and organs, which are non-self,—this superimposition the wise one must put a stop to, by indentifying oneself with the Atman.

ज्ञात्वा स्वं प्रत्यगात्मानं बुद्धितद्वृत्तिसाक्षिणम् ।

सोऽहमित्येव सद्वृत्त्याऽनात्मन्यात्ममतिं जहि ॥

269. Realising thy own Inmost Self, the Witness of the Buddhi and its modifications, and constantly revolving on the positive thought, 'I am He,' conquer this identification with the non-Self.

लोकानुवर्तनं त्यक्त्वा त्यक्त्वा देहानुवर्तनम् ।

शास्त्रानुवर्तनं त्यक्त्वा स्वाध्यासापनयं कुरु ॥२७०॥

270. Relinquishing the observance of social formalities, giving up all ideas of trimming up the body, and avoiding too much engrossment with the Scriptures, do away with the superimposition that has come upon thyself.

लोकवासनया जन्तोः शास्त्रवासनयापि च ।

देहवासनया ज्ञानं यथावन्नेव जायते ॥२७१॥

271. Owing to the desire to walk after society, the passion for too much study of the Scriptures and the desire to keep the body comfortable, people cannot attain to proper Realisation.

(To be continued).

LIFE OF BUDDHA—A STORY.

"It is a wet night and Buddha comes to the cowherd's hut, and gathers in to the wall under the dripping eaves. The rain is pouring down and the winds rising.

"Within the cowherd catches a glimpse of a face through the window and thinks Ha, Ha! Yellow Garb! Stay there! It is good enough for you! And then he begins to sing."

"I have boiled my rice, I have milked my cows,"—so said the herdsman Dhaniya,—“I am living together with my fellows near the banks of the Mahi river. My house is covered, the fire is kindled: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"I am free from anger, free from stubbornness,"—so said Bhagavat,—“I am abiding for one night near the banks of the Mahi river. My house is uncovered, the fire (of passions) is extinguished: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"Gadflies are not to be found with me,"—so said the herdsman Dhaniya,—“in meadows abounding with grass the cows are roaming, and they can endure the rain when it comes: therefore if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"By me is made a well-constructed raft,"—so said Bhagavat,—“I have passed over (to Nirvana). I have reached the further bank, having overcome the torrent (of passions); there is no further use for a raft: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"My wife is obedient, not wanton,"—so said the herdsman Dhaniya,—“for a long time she has been living together with me. She is winning, and I hear nothing wicked of her: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"My mind is obedient and freed,"—so said Bhagavat,—“it has for a long time been highly cultivated and well subdued. There is no longer

anything wicked in me: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"I support myself by my own earnings,"—so said the herdsman Dhaniya,—“and my children are about me healthy. I hear nothing wicked of them: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"I am no one's servant,"—so said Bhagavat,—with what I have gained, I wander about in all the world. There is no need for me to serve: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"I have cows, I have calves,"—so said Dhaniya, “I have cows in calf and heifers. And I have also a bull as lord over the cows; therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"I have no cows; I have no calves,"—so said Bhagavat,—“I have no cows in calf and no heifers. And I have no bull as a lord over the cows: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"The stakes are driven in, and cannot be shaken,"—so said the herdsman Dhaniya,—“the ropes are made of *munja* grass, new and well made, the cows will not be able to break them: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"Having, like a bull, rent the bonds; having, like an elephant, broken through the *galuchchhi* creeper, I shall not again enter into a womb: therefore, if thou like, rain, O Sky!”

"The sky pour down in heavy shower filling both land and sea, and at last the cowherd rises in contrition and wonder and becomes a disciple. The cowherd spoke thus:

"No small gain to us, since we have seen the Bhagavat. We take refuge in thee! O thou endowed with the eye of wisdom! Be thou our master, O great Muni."

—*Dhaniyasutta* (R. C. Dutt's Translation).

REVIEW.

Short Stories. By Srimati Swarnakumari Devi.

Publisher Ganesh & Co., Madras. Price Rs. 2.

It is a book of fourteen stories intended to portray the phases of Indian life so as to bring out the mentality and the motives which determine the springs of action in Indian humanity. As written in the preface: "In all his actions the Hindu instinctively relies upon a Higher power." The pictures of Hindu women are well drawn, but we must confess, there is a false colour here and there influenced by the being seen through the prison of a little Europeanised social forms, but the inner core of a Hindu woman's nature, "her modesty and simplicity, her intense devotion to her husband and his people, her self-effacement and self-sacrifice, and her constant reliance on a Higher Power" stands out in pretty good relief. The last story—*Talisman*—brings out a distinct trait in Hindu nature, the idealism without looking for results which inspires a Hindu to almost unearthly silent heroism for those with whom he feels bound by ties of love under divine providence and who have won him by love. "The Gift of the Goddess Kali"—is the least happy of the stories from the point of the authoress's object of making the East understandable by the West, for it will only heighten the ordinary Westerner's idea that the Goddess is one of vengeance and not the giver of love, purity and strength—the Mother Protectress of the Universe.

THE 18TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES.

The Annual Report shows a steady growth in usefulness and service of the institution which has by its invaluable work of relief activity established itself as a model institution of its kind. The record of its activities and the nature of its service indicate that it supplies a real need of society and institutions of this type are a vital part of the body-politic. People from every province of India sought admission in the Home representing various shades of religions and races, castes and tribes and this gave an opportunity to its workers

to do their humble service to India in miniature.

During the year of the report, indoor relief was rendered to 1153 persons; the relief was of a varied nature, including (i) medical and surgical aid to 977 patients, of whom 370 were women. These were served in a spirit of catholicity with attention to their religious feelings and scruples; the women of orthodox Hindu class were housed in reserved wards, where no sweeper was allowed access, all the duties being performed by the workers themselves. Allopathic, Homœopathic and Ayurvedic systems of medicine were used and the best medical aid was requisitioned from the city which was always given free. 87 surgical operations were undertaken under chloroform.

(ii) Another type of relief is of aged invalids and widows and helpless women. 30 helpless and invalidated women were sheltered and maintained in the Home at Daswasmedh; 11 widows and helpless women of respectable families fallen in poverty maintained in another Branch at Luxa under the control of a Lady Superintendent who has been training them in reading and writing and some useful art by which they may ultimately maintain themselves. (iii) In the Boy's Home, helpless and orphan boys were admitted, maintained and their education looked after. Most of them were admitted into different schools free and some taught in the Home itself. The outdoor relief was of a diversified nature and great in volume, extending to many forms of human distress (i) Medical aid was rendered to patients amounting to the total of 14,723 persons, average daily attendance was 96. (ii) Weekly doles of rice and monetary help to aged invalids were distributed to 136 destitute persons and 74 helpless women were assisted with monthly allowances. (iii) 20 persons who were in extreme condition attendant on starvation from dire poverty were saved. (iv) Miscellaneous relief in the shape of money, food and clothing was rendered in 495 helpless cases.

One important feature of the work of the Home developed during the last influenza epidemic. Besides making arrangements for town patients which rose to 35 at a time, but when the epidemic was raging virulently in the outlying villages, it was then that the Home did a vitally important work. The Home thus furnishes a machinery ready at hand and on a permanent working footing which

is thus available during periods of sudden distress and calamity. The work of the Home in influenza relief was very successful and to quote from the official report: "Hundreds of homes are happy to-day because of the lives saved by the workers." The Home opened five centres in different places from which they reached the afflicted villagers, visiting the sick daily and prescribing medicine and diet and taking care of patients till they were out of danger. Of the 1600 patients attended to only 69 cases proved fatal. The workers of the Home also distributed blankets and clothing to enable the villagers to withstand the climatic rigours and the consequent attacks of influenza.

The income of the Home during the year was Rs. 31,652-4-10, and expenses came to the amount Rs. 28,733-6-11.

APPEAL.

The usefulness and indispensability of Home scarcely needs dilating on. By steady growth, ministering to a vital need of society the Home has established its place as a vital part of the body-politic. It embodies in practical shape the Swami Vivekananda's ideal of serving the social body in the spirit of the Lord immanent which is an imperative and vital necessity in all programmes of social well-being. This spirit and its practical realisation is sought in the Home and is one of the most hopeful forms of activity in reawakened Hinduism. Need it be said that such activities require ample encouragement from our countrymen, that the work of serving the material and moral welfare of our fellow-brethren, the germ of all social well-being, may flow in a thousand streams over the length and breadth of the country. The Home looks up to the generous public for permanent and adequate endowment to ensure the continuance of the work unaffected by financial fluctuations of periods of stress and difficulty; for past few years the income of the Home has been barely sufficient to meet the expenses; although there has been some generous legacies and donations strengthening the Home's permanent fund, it is hoped these will be followed by more; among the princely donations, the Home thankfully maintains the amount of Rs. 5000 to its permanent fund from the good Rajah of Benares. The workers appeal to the generosity of the public in the fervent hope of receiving a ready response for a permanent fund.

NEWS AND NOTES.

A pamphlet has been sent us from Mexico which details the work that is being done in far away Mexico for the study and propagation of Vedanta. It is the official organ of the Vedanta Society, Mexico, which is devoted to the study of Vedanta, of religious, philosophical and occult questions. It opens with a quotation from the Mundaka Upanishad, "The Supreme Knowledge is that by which the Imperishable One is realised." It describes the constitution and the aim and objects of the Vedanta Society which is under the direction of Mr. Silvestre Garza. An article on Karma follows after that. Swami Vivekananda said that it is imperative that the ideas Vedanta and Indian philosophy should spread all the world for the spiritual uplift and advancement of humanity; and these Societies of Vedantic study are a hopeful fulfilment of that. We wish the Society and its members all success and progress in their Vedantic study and realisation.

WE have received the Second Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Home of Service, Silchar, 1917. The report shows a modest outturn of work carried on silently by the selfless and enthusiastic workers and organisers. A library of religious and philosophical books and magazines has been instituted which has been pretty well requisitioned by the public, the average issue being 113 books monthly. The Home undertook and performed indoor nursing and treating of a modest number of patients and also reached medical help and succour to distressed persons incapable of personal attendance. A night school for the boys of the poorer classes was held during the year with a modest number of pupils on the rolls with the prospect of increase. A fire-brigade with necessary fire appliances was instituted and did successful work during four cases of fire in the town. Flood relief work was opened from the Home during the disastrous floods of 1916 which visited the districts of Cachar and Sylhet and nearly Rs. 3000 was spent in distributing relief. The Home has in the year purchased a plot of land for building a permanent Home where workers may be trained for service im-

lined with the proper spirit of renunciation and selflessness. A Provident Relief Fund has been opened for opening relief-works in cases of sudden emergencies. It is pleasing to note that Swami Vivekananda's gospel of service is bearing fruit, and we only venture to say that along with the removal of material wants, proper attention should be paid to the providing of education to those who need it most. The yearly expenditure during the year amounted to Rs. 4700.

Ramkrishna Seva Samiti, Sylhet.—A sister institution working on the same lines as the above. Among its activities may be mentioned, religious classes and meetings held during the year. Stipends were given to poor students for prosecuting study. Charitable work in the form of medical relief was rendered to patients suffering from diseases and the association participated in rendering relief during the floods of Cachar and Sylhet. When the cloth distress was very acute among the poorer classes, the Samiti distributed pieces of cloth to the distressed people. Relief work was also opened during the prevalence of the influenza epidemic. On the whole the Home indicates a modest out-turn of work undertaken in the proper spirit of religious services.

We have received the following report of the progress of the Famine Relief Work undertaken by the Ramkrishna Mission, in Bengal and Behar during the months January—March 1919:—

"In total, we have distributed in the four months, Mds. 860-23 seers of rice and 440 pieces of new cloth. And besides one centre at Indpur in the district of Bankura, we have opened another in the same district in Kotulpur Thana. Again to cope with the intense scarcity of water in those districts we have been re-excavating one tank and sinking several wells in Thana Puncha and Indpur, the report of which will be given later on. And by the first week of the current month we have opened a centre at Brahmanbari in the district of Tippera, wherefrom we have commenced distribution in 17 villages to 195 recipients. We have also started our work of relieving on a small scale at Kunda, near Deoghar, in the district of Santal-Parganas. The Fire Relief work at Bhuba-

neshvar, in the district of Puri, is still going on. Moreover we are hearing appeals from all quarters of this Province about want of cloth. But to meet this dire want is an enormous task; but, still, we expect with assurance, through the liberal grants of the generous public, we will be able to deal with the situation at least to some extent.

All contributions however small will be cordially and thankfully acknowledged, under the following addresses:—(1) The President, R. K. Mission, Belur, Howrah. (2) The Secretary, R. K. Mission, Udbodhan Office, Bagbazar, Calcutta.

We have received the report of the Ramkrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur, Dist. Howrah, for the year 1918:—

During the year 1918, the number of patients treated at the Dispensary amounts to the total of 13,443 including both new and repeated cases. The number of new cases is 3,460, the rest represents the repeated numbers. The Institution has grown in popularity as evidenced by the fact that it has attracted patients from a wider radius than before. The Institution proved a veritable boon to the local population specially during the malarious season of the rainy months, when the fever rages virulently and people in great numbers resort to us for help.

The Bally Municipality has kindly made a grant of Rs. 120 for one year to the Charitable Dispensary, and it is to be hoped that they will continue the grant as it ministers chiefly to their rate-payers.

Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co., has earned the thanks of the institution for supplying us with the greater part of our yearly stock of medicines free.

The funds of the dispensary during the year amounted to Rs. 322-10-0, and expenditure was Rs. 62-6-6.

As the institution is a philanthropic one and supplies a vital need of the poor people in the interior villages, their cause will attract the attention of generous public and funds will be forthcoming to maintain the institution to continue its beneficent work. Any contribution, may be sent to the President or the Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah and will be thankfully received and acknowledged.